

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JIDDA 05314 190959Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----088886 191005Z /14
O 190922Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2757
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T JIDDA 5314

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

FOR THE ACTING SECRETARY FROM NEWSOM

LONDON PASS SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SA
SUBJ: IMPRESSIONS FROM SAUDI ARABIA

1. SEPTELS WILL REPORT CONVERSATION HELD JULY 18 WITH
SAUDI ARABIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND MFA OFFICIALS. FOLLOW-
ING ARE MY IMPRESSIONS.

2. SAUDI ARABIA HAS CLEARLY EMERGED AS SIGNIFICANT CENTER
OF CONTACT AND INFLUENCE WITH NATIONS (MAINLY MUSLIM) OF
SOUTH ASIA AND AFRICA. DURING CONVERSATIONS HERE, FOR
EXAMPLE, I LEARNED THAT NUMEIRI CAME HERE TWO DAYS AGO FOR
THREE HOURS TO DISCUSS RESOLUTIONS BEFORE OAU SUMMIT.
INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY IS VISITING HERE TODAY. SAUDI
ARABS ARE IN TOUCH WITH AND SUPPORTING SEKOU TOURE,
NEW REGIME IN MAURITANIA, NIGER, MALI, DJIBOUTI AND
MANY OTHERS.

3. WHILE RELATIONS WITH US ARE EXCELLENT, THEY CANNOT
RESIST REITERATION OF LITANY ABOUT U.S. SHORTCOMINGS

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IN FACE CLEAR COMMUNIST ADVANCES. I SUSPECT PART OF THIS
COMES FROM APPROACHES MADE TO THEM BY MANY OF OUR FRIENDS
WHO BASE APPEAL FOR FUNDS ON CLAIM THAT U.S. HAS DIS-
APPOINTED THEM. TURKEY AND PAKISTAN ARE CASES CITED
TO ME.

4. NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE WE CAN COUNT ON THEM TO ASSIST

IN MATTERS OF PARALLEL INTEREST TO US. PAKISTAN IS CLEARLY ONE. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD MOVE AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN (ASSUMING REPROCESSING ISSUE RESOLVED) TO PROPOSE DEFINITE PLAN OF ACTION FOR PAKISTAN TO SAUDIS, AS WELL AS IRANIANS.

5. THEY SAY THEY ARE LESS INTERESTED IN SOMALI PROBLEM NOW BECAUSE OF GRAVER THREAT FROM SOUTH YEMEN. THEY STRONGLY URGE US TO HELP NORTH YEMEN AND I BELIEVE WE SHOULD DO SO ALONG LINES BEING DEVELOPED FOR DISCUSSION IN JIDDA ON JULY 29. NEVERTHELESS, I HAVE FEELING THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOUNTER UNEXPECTED SHIFTS OR DELAYS IN SAUDI ACTIONS BECAUSE THE POLITICS OF THE PENINSULA WILL AT TIMES OUTWEIGH, IN THEIR EYES, THE COMMUNIST THREAT. I HAD FEELING THEIR DEEP CONCERN OVER SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SOUTH YEMEN IS ALSO MOTIVATED TO SOME DEGREE BY FACT THAT FACTION THEY WERE OPPOSING WON OUT IN YEMEN. FUTURE DELAYS IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION OF NORTH YEMEN PROGRAM COULD STILL RESULT FROM THEIR LATENT FEAR THAT THEY CANNOT FULLY TRUST ANY YEMENIS.

6. DESPITE THEIR REPETITION OF OUR SHORTCOMINGS, FACT IS THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE MANY PRECISE SUGGESTIONS OF WHAT WE SHOULD DO. I HAVE FEELING THEY WOULD WELCOME MORE VERBAL OR WRITTEN REASSURANCES REGARDING OUR CLEAR SUPPORT FOR THEIR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. BEYOND THIS,
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THEY WANT SOME HELP ON NORTH YEMEN, OUR CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR ARAB CAUSE IN MIDDLE EAST, HELP TO SOMALIA, HELP TO PAKISTAN, AND A U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA THAT WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH THEIR ARAB CREDENTIALS. (I RAISED INFORMALLY WITH MANSOURI QUESTION OF HOME PORT FOR MID EAST FORCE. HE SAID SAG COULD NOT HELP BECAUSE IT WOULD THEN BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO OPPOSE SOVIET PRESENCE IN IRAQ. "WHY NOT," HE SAID, "TRY SOMLAIA. THEY WOULD BE WILLING FOR A PRICE.")

7. EVEN THOUGH WE MAY FEEL THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF FEARS OVER THE SOVIET MENACE MAY BE SOMEWHAT OVERSTATED, THERE IS NO DOUBTING FACT THAT THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT PIECE OF REAL ESTATE AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO CONSULT CLOSELY, BEAR PATIENTLY THEIR LITANY AND THEIR CONTRADICTIONS, AND FIND IMAGINATIVE AND ACCEPTABLE WAYS TO ASSURE THEM OF OUR CONSTANCY AND SUPPORT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JIDDA05314
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: OA
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850033-0142
Format: TEL
From: JIDDA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780744/aaaabknu.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 81cdb370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1959153
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IMPRESSIONS FROM SAUDI ARABIA
TAGS: PEPR, YE, YS, US, SA, PK, IR
To: STATE SS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/81cdb370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014